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09/862,637	05/22/2001	Angela G. Dusevic	5460-00401	8671

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EXAMINER

JARRETT, SCOTT L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/862,637

Applicant(s)

DUSEVIC ET AL.

Examiner

Scott L. Jarrett

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 89-151 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 89-151 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on January 9, 2006 has been entered.

Applicant's amendment canceled claims 1-88 and added new claims 89-151. Currently Claims 89-151 are pending.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to Claims 89-151 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

It is noted that the applicant did not challenge the officially noticed facts cited in the previous office action(s) therefore those statements as presented are herein after prior art. Specifically it has been established that it was old and well known in the art at the time of the invention:

- to provide information regarding products, services, goods, and the like via the Internet in relation to specific user goals (needs, wants, activities, etc.);

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- to design and implement information systems (e.g. web sites) using well known user-centric design methods (user centered design); and

- to use Application Service Providers (ASP) to deploy, host and manage information systems (e.g. web sites).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 89-96, 98-120, 122-134 and 136-151 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because directed towards non-statutory subject matter.

Regarding Claims 89-96, 98-120, 122-134, 136-151, for a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

In the present case, the claimed method/system merely provides for the organization of a multi-level hierarchical web site, commonly referred to as a site's information architecture, and therefore does not produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result (i.e. merely represents a static collection of web pages/documents arranged/organized in a hierarchical manner).

A useful, concrete and tangible result, for example, might be achieved through such features as the dynamic generation of problem/solution information based on user specific information/events, a real-world/actual effect.

Regarding Claims 97, 121 and 135 the system/method for organizing a multi-level site enables users to add/save links (e.g. bookmarks) to one or more personal displays (web pages), a real-world/actual effect, and therefore does produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claim 103 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claim 103, Claim 103 recites the limitation "the web browser" in 102. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Examiner interpreted the claim to read "a web browser" for the purpose of examination. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 89-151 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sullivan et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,615,240 in view of Ross et al., E-Business in the Upstream Petroleum Industry (2000).

Regarding Claims 89, 113, 127 and 141 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks related to the problem resolution comprising (Abstract; "Guided support means the system guides the user to find an answer to his or her technical support question or problem." Column 2, Lines 13-21):

- organizing content comprising a plurality of documents (web pages, items, etc.) related to the solutions and tasks in a knowledge base according to a hierarchy of categories related to one or more (work) areas wherein each category in the hierarchy has zero or more child categories (sub-categories), wherein a category with one or more child categories is a parent category and wherein each document in the knowledge base is associated with one or more categories in the hierarchy (Column 8, Lines 37-50; Figure 7);

- implementing a plurality of (defined) paths through the hierarchy of categories (e.g. providing hypertext links amongst the pages in the web site), wherein each path represents a particular strategy (approach, technique, procedure, etc.) for solving a particular problem or for performing a particular task, wherein each path is configured to direct the end user to one or more documents in the knowledge base and wherein each document in the knowledge base is reachable by one or more paths (Column 6, Lines 44-68; Column 8, Lines 1-8 and 30-68; Column 9, Lines 1-19; 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-28; Figures 4-7);

- displaying on a computer system user-selectable macro (high-level, top-level, category-level, parent, etc.) tasks links and individual (low-level, child, etc.) tasks links (Column 9, Lines 50-68; Column 10, Lines 1-14; Figures 5-9); and

- receiving (first/second/third) user input (selection) of one or more of the plurality of links (macro, individual, category, low-level, child, parent, etc.) and displaying the selected information (tasks, user interface, document, screen, etc.) wherein each task (category, document, high-level, low-level, macro, etc.) is associated with one or more paths through the hierarchy of categories (Column 8, 35-68; Column 9, Lines 1-68; Column 10, Lines 1-27; Figures 4-9).

Sullivan et al. further teach that the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks further comprises: a processor, memory (storing knowledge base), a server program and a plurality of displays (screens, user interfaces, interfaces, pages, browsers, etc.) to access the knowledge base (system; Figures 1-3).

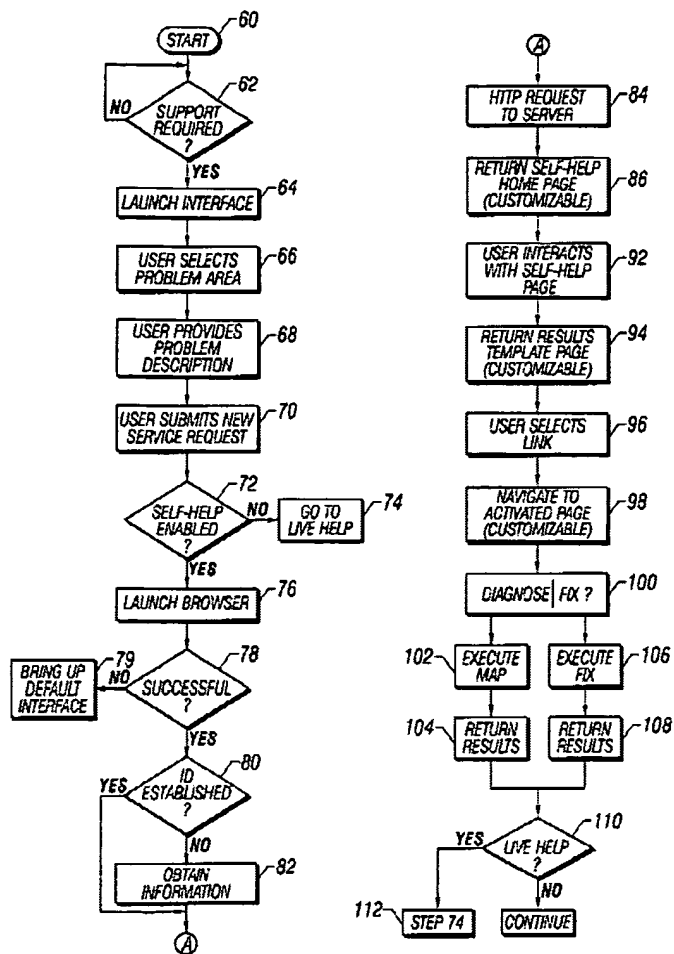


FIG. 4

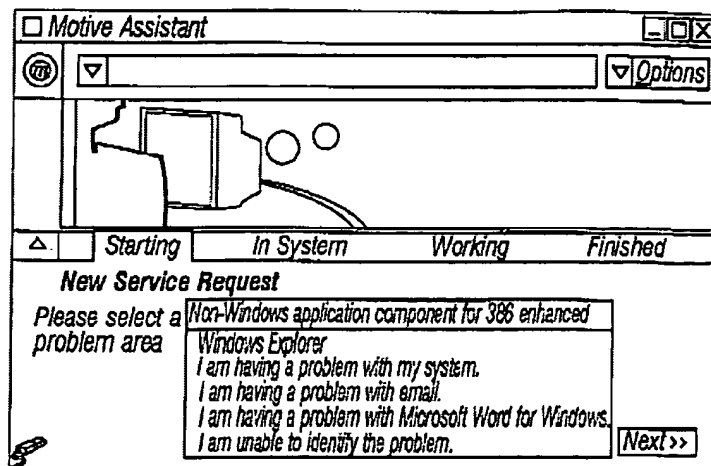



FIG. 5

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MOTIVE COMMUNICATIONS
FIRST IN SUPPORT CHAIN AUTOMATION

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- ☐ [Release Note](#) - Test Release Note
- 91 • ☒ [Support Note](#) - Guided support for Outlook Express
- ☐ [FAQ](#) - New FAQ


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FIG. 7

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MOTIVE COMMUNICATIONS
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 **Support Note:**
Wrong Wwintl32.dll Error

Problem

The information in this article applies to:

- Microsoft Word 97 for Windows, Service Release 1 (SR-1)

SYMPTOMS: When you attempt to start Microsoft Word after you have run the Microsoft Office97 Service Release 1 (SR-1) Patch, you may receive the following error message.

The wrong VWINL32.DLL has been loaded.

CAUSE: This error message occurs when the versions of the Winword.exe file and the Wwintl32.dll file are not the same.

NOTE: It is not sufficient to check the file version information that is displayed when you right-click the program icon and click Properties on the shortcut menu.

This problem may also occur if a wwintl32.dll file is located in the Windows\System directory.

Solution

When you install the SR-1 Patch, the Winword.exe or the Wwintl32.dll files are not properly updated. Select the Motive Fixit icon lower to resolve this problem.

More Background: The following table shows the file size and date of the Winword.exe file installed by Word 97 or the Word 97 SR-1 Patch.

Version	File size	Date
Word 97	5194 KB	11/17/96
Word 97 SR-1 Patch	5200 KB	7/11/97

The default location for the Winword.exe is the C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office folder.

The following table shows the file size, date and location of the Wwintl32.dll file installed by Word 97 and the Word 97 SR-1 Patch.

Version	File size	Date
Word 97	1131 KB	11/17/96
Word 97 SR-1 Patch	1132 KB	7/11/97

The Default location for the Wwintl32.dll file is the following:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office

FIG. 9

Sullivan et al. does not expressly teach that the intended field of use for the limited to problems/solutions related to upstream exploration and production areas of the oil and gas industry as claimed.

Ross et al. teach providing a wide-range of services (industry service providers) in the oil and gas industry including but not limited to information/services targeted to geoscientists, engineers, environmentalist and the like wherein the e-business services include knowledge and risk management, e-services, asset trading and the like (Figures 1-3), in an analogous art of assisting users in performing tasks for the purposes of streamlining/improving upstream exploration and production processes in the oil and gas industry using well-known e-business/e-commerce methods/systems (Column 1, Paragraphs 1-2, Page 158; Column 2, Number 1, Page 160; Conclusion, Page 162).

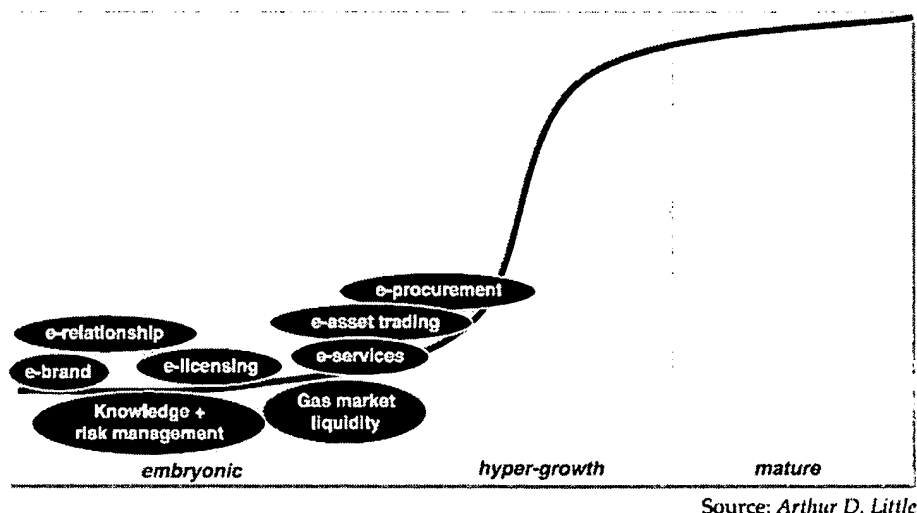
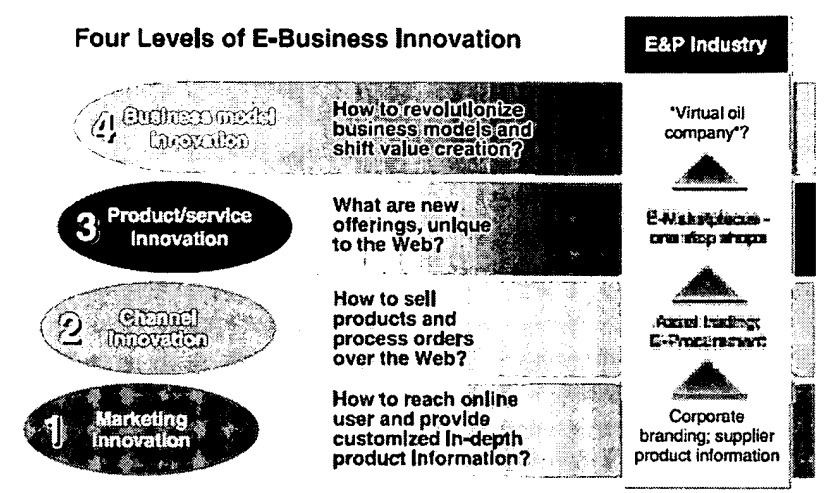
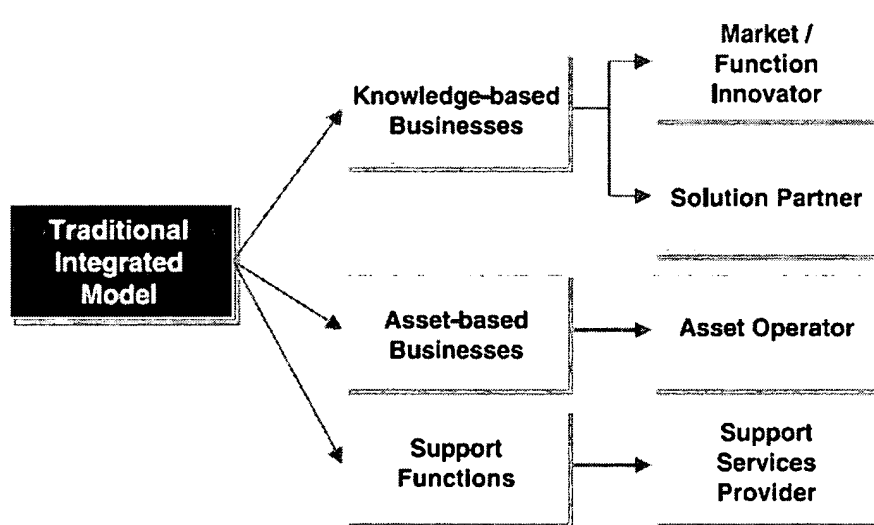


Figure 1: E-business opportunities in the upstream sector are still in the early stages of development.



Source: Arthur D. Little

Figure 2: Four levels of e-business innovation can be identified; new entrants can start at level 3 or 4 when they are not hampered by legacy business models.



Source: Arthur D. Little

Figure 3: The petroleum industry may be evolving into more specialized business models, and e-business is likely to accelerate these changes.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to that the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions and performing tasks as taught by Sullivan et al. would have applied to the upstream oil and gas industry, specifically to use the system/method to support the plurality of users/activities related to the upstream exploration and production in the oil and gas industry, in view of the teachings of Ross et al.; the resultant system/method enabling oil and gas users (businesses, companies, scientists, etc.) to leverage well known e-business systems/methods to improve/enhance E&P processes (Ross et al.: Column 1, Paragraphs 1-2, Page 158; Conclusion, Page 162).

Further it is noted that while Sullivan et al. does not expressly teach that the intended field of use for the system/method is limited to problems/solutions related to upstream exploration and production areas of the oil and gas industry these differences are only found in the non-functional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited nor do they alter the recited structural elements. The recited method steps for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks would be performed the same regardless of the method/system's intended field of use (upstream exploration and production in the oil & gas industry). Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific field of use. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, see *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP 2106.

Further it is noted that the phrases "parent", "child", "macro" and "individual" merely represent non-functional labels to describe/denote the plurality of levels of organization in the system/method (web site). The recited method steps for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks would be performed the same regardless of the specific labels used to denote the plurality of levels in the hierarchical organization of the system/method (website). Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific labels used to denote the plurality of hierarchical web site levels. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP 2106.

Regarding Claims 90, 114, 128 and 142 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users finding solutions to problems and performing tasks further comprising:

- a task-centric user interface (web page) for assisting users in locating content in the knowledge base wherein the interface comprises (guided support, self-help, technical support interface, dialog screen; Column 7, Lines 12-27; Figures 5-9):
 - one or more task items (web pages, documents, FAQs, how-tos, etc.), wherein each of the one or more task items specifies a particular task related to the specific area (problem, solution, work, etc.; active content pages, basic content; Column 7, Lines 62-68; Column 8, Lines 35-50; Column 9, Lines 1-19 and 50-68; Figures 9-11);

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- one or more subtask items each associated with a (first) task specified by a currently active task item of the one or more task items, wherein each of the one or more subtask items specifies a particular subtask for each task, wherein each of the one or more subtask items is user selectable to display task details for the particular subtask (drill down, iterative/interactive self help/problem diagnosis and resolution; Column 7, Lines 5-11; Column 9, Lines 62-68; Column 10, Lines 1-22; Figure 4);

- selecting a (first, second, etc.) subtask item of the one or more subtask items and displaying one or more task detail items of the subtask item wherein each of the one or more task detail items are user-selectable to display one or a plurality of task details (displays) associated with the particular task detail item (Column 9, Lines 62-68; Column 10, Lines 1-22; Figures 9-11); and

- wherein each of the plurality of task details (displays) comprises information for use in assisting the end user in performing one or more portions of at least one of the tasks related to the problem/solution area (Column 9, Lines 1-20, 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-22; Figures 8-11).

Regarding Claims 91, 115, 129 and 143 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks further comprising (Column 2, Lines 13-47):

- selecting and displaying a (first, second, etc.) task detail item of the one or more task detail items in response to a (first, second, third, etc.) user input (Column 8, Lines 35-68; Column 9, Lines 1-20; Figures 5-11);

- wherein the task detail (display) comprises information about one or more products or services provided by a vendor (company, business, firm, etc.) and wherein the information related to performing one or more particular tasks (support notes, how-tos, FAQs, release notes, etc.; Column 8, Lines 35-50; Column 9, Lines 1-19 and 55-68).

Regarding Claims 92, 116, 130 and 144 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the (first) task detail (display) comprises textual information configured for use in finding a solution to a particular problem (Column 9, Lines 1-18; Figures 8-11).

Regarding Claims 93, 117, 131 and 145 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the task detail (display) comprises one or more icons (images, pictures, indicia, graphics, buttons, etc.) which are each user-selectable to display additional information configured to finding a solution to a particular problem (multimedia content, active content/pages, live help; Column 9, Lines 1-19; Column 10, Lines 22-28; Figures 5-7).

Regarding Claims 94, 118, 132 and 146 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the additional information includes one or more textual, graphical, video or

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audio information (multimedia; Column 9, Lines 1-19; Column 11, Lines 49-56; Figures 5-7).

Regarding Claims 95, 119, 133 and 147 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the (first) task detail (display) comprises one or more items which are user-selectable to display other task details (displays, screens, web pages, etc.; Column 2, Lines 13-47; Column 8, Lines 35-50; Column 9, Lines 1-19 and 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-21; Figures 4-11).

Regarding Claims 96, 120, 134 and 148 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the (first) task detail (display) comprises one or more items which are user-selectable to display another portion (part, detail, etc.) of the task detail (Column 2, Lines 13-47; Column 8, Lines 35-50; Column 9, Lines 1-19 and 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-21; Figures 5-11).

Regarding Claims 97, 121 and 135 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the system utilizes personalization/customization to provide tailored solutions to the user's problems (personal displays; Column 9, Lines 1-10; Column 11, Lines 35-48).

Sullivan et al. does not expressly teach displaying one or more personal displays or subsequently adding a link to the personal display as claimed.

Official notice is taken that displaying one or more personal displays (screens, interfaces, web pages, etc.) for a user and enabling users to add a link to one or more personal displays is old and very well know. For example Yahoo! enables users to create a customized home page wherein users can add/create links to desired content/information (MyYahoo!) thereby making it easier for users to access information most relevant to them. Yahoo! also enables users to find solutions to a plurality of problems via interactively searching the Internet or browsing a plurality of categories/subcategories.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks as taught by Sullivan et al. would have benefited from enabling users to create personal displays (e.g. custom/personalized home pages) by adding links to relevant content in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system/method making it easier for users to access information of most use and/or interest to them.

Regarding Claims 98, 122 and 136 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the task detail information includes information about one or more products or services

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configured for use in the problem/solution area (support notes, how-tos, FAQs, release notes, etc.; Column 8, Lines 35-50; Column 9, Lines 1-19 and 55-68).

Regarding Claims 99, 123, 137 and 149 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein each of the plurality of task detail displays is associated with one or more of a plurality of task detail items, wherein each of the plurality of task detail items is associated with one or more subtask items and wherein each of the items is associated with one or more of the plurality of individual task items (Column 7, Lines 45-68; Column 8, Lines 1-50; Column 9, Lines 1-21 and 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-27; Column 11, Lines 30-63; Figures 5-11).

Regarding Claims 100, 124, 138 and 150 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein each of the individual tasks (user interface, web pages, screens, etc.) specifies a particular low-level task related to the problem/solution area and wherein each individual task item is user-selectable to access content from the knowledge based related to the low-level task specified by the individual task item (Column 7, Lines 45-68; Column 8, Lines 1-50; Column 9, Lines 1-21 and 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-27; Column 11, Lines 30-63; Figures 5-11).

Regarding Claims 101, 125, 139 and 151 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein each high-level task item on the macro task user interface (page, display, etc.) specifies a particular high-level task related to one or more work areas and wherein each high-level task item is user-selectable to access content (information, document, pages) from the knowledge base related to the particular high-level task specified by the high-level task item (Column 7, Lines 45-68; Column 8, Lines 1-50; Column 9, Lines 1-21 and 40-68; Column 10, Lines 1-27; Column 11, Lines 30-63; Figures 5-11).

Further regarding Claims 99-101, 123-125, 137-139 and 149-151 it is noted that the phrases "high-level", "low-level", "subtask" and "individual" merely represent non-functional labels to describe/denote the plurality of levels of organization in the system/method (web site). The recited method steps for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks would be performed the same regardless of the specific labels used to denote the plurality of levels in the hierarchical organization of the system/method (website). Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific labels used to denote the plurality of web site levels/categories. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); *MPEP* 2106.

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Regarding Claims 102-103 and 140 Sullivan et al. teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the (first) display, the macro user interface (page, display, etc.) and the individual task user interface are configured to be displayed by user interface software such as a web browser, the pages/interface being provided by a web server (Column 5, Lines 16-57; Figures 1-3).

Regarding Claim 104 Sullivan does not expressly teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the wherein the (first) display, the macro user interface (page, display, etc.) and the individual task user interface are provided to the user interface software provided by an Application Service Provider (ASP) as claimed.

Official notice is taken that the use of Application Service Providers (ASP) to deploy, host and manage applications (systems) is old and very well known wherein ASP's enable users speed the implementation of systems (i.e. time to market), minimize the expenses and risks associated with the development and maintenance of the applications (systems; i.e. spreads those risk between the ASP and the customer) and/or counter the chronic shortage of qualified technical personnel available in-house.

That an Application Service Provider or an internal information technology division provides the method and system for assisting users perform a task is obvious in light of the prior art since the intended field of use (e.g. delivery mechanism, location of

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the system inside or outside the business) does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to deliver (host) the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks as taught by Sullivan et al. would have benefited from utilizing an Application Service Provider to deploy, host and/or maintain the system/method in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system/method overcoming the disadvantages of managing/developing such a system in-house by minimizing the expenses and risks associated with the development and maintenance of the system.

Regarding Claims 105-112 and 126 Sullivan et al. does not expressly teach that the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks is limited to the upstream exploration and production areas of the oil and gas industry or subsequently that the task information is related to at least one of the following disciplines associated with upstream exploration or production areas in the oil and gas industry: geology, geophysics, drilling, production engineering, reservoir engineering, business management or information management as claimed.

Ross et al. teach providing a wide-range of services (industry service providers) in the oil and gas industry including but not limited to information/services targeted to geoscientists, engineers, environmentalist and the like wherein the information/services include drilling, benchmarking, reservoir benchmarking, environmental modeling and the like (Column 1, Paragraph 3, Page 159; Figures 1-3), in an analogous art of assisting users in performing tasks for the purposes of streamlining/improving upstream exploration and production processes in the oil and gas industry using well-known e-business/e-commerce methods/systems (Column 1, Paragraphs 1-2, Page 158; Column 2, Number 1, Page 160; Conclusion, Page 162).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to that the system and method for assisting users in finding solutions and performing tasks as taught by Sullivan et al. would have applied to the upstream oil and gas industry, specifically to use the system/method to support the plurality of users/activities related to the upstream exploration and production in the oil and gas industry, in view of the teachings of Ross et al.; the resultant system and method enabling oil and gas users (businesses, companies, scientists, etc.) leverage well known e-business systems/methods to improve/enhance E&P processes (Ross et al.; Column 1, Paragraphs 1-2, Page 158; Conclusion, Page 162).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Grewal et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,691,159, teach an online system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein users navigate (select user-selectable content, links), via a plurality of paths, through a multilevel categorized information system provided in a task-centric user interface.

Grewal et al. further teach that the task-centric user interface provides a plurality of task item details related to the users specific problem/solution and that the information includes information about one or more products/services provided by vendors.

- Durham et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,801,222 teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks via an multi-level hierarchically organized web site in a task-oriented fashion.

- Haviv-Segal et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002.0049705, teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks wherein the system/method guides users, via a plurality of hierarchical paths, to a plurality of individual, low-level as well as subtask information related to the problem/solution.

- BroadVision, Inc., Launches One-To-One Knowledge (1998) teaches an online system and method for assisting users in finding and utilizing knowledge (e.g. task information) wherein the system/method utilizes well known personalization/customization techniques/systems/methods to provide a "user-centric"

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view of the knowledge/information. The article further teaches the use of Application Service Providers to provide the user-center knowledge management system/method.

- Reynolds, Hadley et al., Enterprise knowledge has a face (1999) teaches the wide-spread use of enterprise information/knowledge portals that enable businesses to capture process knowledge and provide a personalized/customized user interface that enables users to navigate (access, find, etc.) the knowledge ("Corporate portal developers focus on a user-centric information system that provides access to working information in one interface").

- Yahoo, Tibco partner on portal plans (1999) teaches Yahoo!'s corporate portal system and method (Corporate MyYahoo!) that "will create personalized Web pages combining Yahoo's existing information services including news, weather, stocks, messaging, calendars, search engines with internal corporate information."

- BroadVision Introduces First e-Business Application for Easy Generation of Personalized Corporate Knowledge (1999) teaches a user/project/task-centric system/method for assisting users in locating and using a plurality of "corporate knowledge" (knowledge portal; "BroadVision One-To-One Knowledge is the first e-business application designed for easy generation of personalized, user- and process-centric corporate knowledge portals. It presents information generated by a wide variety of sources to users according to their particular needs, based on their profiles, interests or roles."

- BroadVision's E-Business Application Power Xerox.com (1999) teach a system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems and performing tasks

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wherein the system/method simplifies “the process of learning about products and services, to enabling on-line purchasing and support.”

- Business Internet Initiates Action (1999) teaches the well-known use of Internet technologies to develop knowledge management and industry specific solutions such as portals for the energy industry wherein the knowledge management tools/systems enable users to navigate and personalize/customize their access to a plurality of business knowledge bases.

- Peebler, Robert, The Virtual Oil Company (2000) teaches the impacts of e-business/e-commerce technologies on the oil and gas industry.

- SAIC and Halliburton to Form Internet Venture to Transform E&P Operational Processes (2000) teaches the utilization of well known e-commerce/e-business technologies/approaches (e.g. web portals) to enhance/improve activities related to the upstream exploration and production in the oil and gas industry. The article further teaches the adaptation of known “workflow-centric portals” to the oil and gas industry.

- KSP: Putting the Energy into the Workplace (2000) teaches the application of knowledge management system/methods to the oil and gas (energy) industry wherein application service providers, data service providers and knowledge service providers integrate to provide systems/methods to support a plurality of business processes/workflows.

- Gibson, John, Knowledge Management and New IT Architecture Will Maximize Upstream Value Creation (2000) teaches the application of well known knowledge

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management methods/systems to the challenges facing the upstream exploration and production areas of the oil and gas industry.

- Cope, Gordon, B2B and the Oilpatch (2000) teaches a plurality of internet portals for the oil and gas industry including but not limited to online portals targeted at the upstream exploration and production areas of the oil & gas industry. Gordon further teaches that SAIC, Halliburton and Landmark Graphics Group has planned, “for the last **five** years” (emphasis added) a system and method to provide knowledge services over the Internet via a portal.

- Perdue, Jeanne, The KM Toolbox (2000), teaches the utilization of well-known knowledge management systems/methods for managing a plurality of user/task specific information in the oil and gas industry, for example FlashFind Corp.’s system/method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems by providing access to a plurality of problem/solution information (manuals, best practices, etc.).

- Perdue, Jeanne, E-Collaboration (2000), teaches an online system and method for assisting users in finding solutions to problems related to the oil and gas industry (knowledge portals, expert panels, knowledge communities), such as Petroweb’s internet knowledge base.

- MyLandmark Reinvents Customer Experience (2001) teaches Landmark Graphics online “customer-driven” knowledge services system and method wherein the system/method was developed using well-known creative design and cognitive science tools/techniques/methods.

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- Information Architecture for the World-Wide Web (1998) teaches a plurality of old and very well known methods/techniques to organizing content/information including but not limited to "task-oriented" hierarchical web sites comprising a multiple levels/categories (parent/child, category/subcategory).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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